

The Sun

MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 1915.

Entered at the Post Office at New York as Second Class Mail Matter.

Subscriptions by Mail, Postpaid.

DAILY, Per Month.....	\$2.50
DAILY, Per Year.....	25 00
SUNDAY, Per Month.....	25 00
SUNDAY, Per Year.....	2 50
DAILY AND SUNDAY, Per Month.....	3 50
DAILY AND SUNDAY, Per Year.....	35 00

Published daily, including Sunday, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association at 170 Nassau street, in the Borough of Manhattan, New York. President and Treasurer, William C. Heisk, 170 Nassau street; Vice-President, Edward F. Mitchell, 170 Nassau street; Secretary, C. E. Lutton, 170 Nassau street.

London office, Elmhurst House, 1 Arundel street, Strand.

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has frequently been praised. Yet it contains other provisions offensive and dangerous. It calls for the exclusion of persons of "constitutional psychopathic inferiority," a phrase that may be tortured into an excuse for keeping anybody on the far side of the Battery sea wall. The sections under which informers would be rewarded afford a means of blackmail that recalls nothing except the Mann act, whose operation has become so notorious that the Department of Justice is now seeking ways of restraining the extortioners whom it shelters. One clause prohibits the entrance of persons who have been "legally accused of felony," and this in a country where prosecutions are begun and indictments found on the merest suspicion!

When Mr. Wilson considers this measure his intelligent opposition to the literacy test will naturally incline him to disapprove it. But he need not rest on this single section. The bill is full of excellent reasons for the use of the veto power.

Business in the New Year.

At this season it is customary for men of affairs to express forward-looking views in response to requests for their opinion as to the probable course of volumes and values in trade, industry and finance. A striking but not astonishing feature of the advent of 1915 has been the widespread reluctance to utter any forecasts of the sort. Nevertheless, the justifiable assumption of continued American neutrality in the war which is in progress abroad furnishes a basis for confident belief that 1915 will be a year of substantial business recovery in the United States.

This is still a country of great opportunity, in some respects all the greater because of the lamentable misfortunes of Europe. After the war myriads in the Old World are going to long for the possibilities of establishing homes in our land, and today we have one hundred million of the most energetic and ambitious of peoples breathing the air of freedom and always fired with hope of the future.

Never has our country suffered more than a temporary economic check or setback. The record of our past and the knowledge of our vast unexploited resources for growth are a guarantee that there is a future of unprecedented expansion to prepare for. We can be sure that there will be men with the vision to see it, to point out the prospect of profit and start enterprise going toward it.

In the meantime the way has been cleared for business betterment. Supplies of goods and materials in shops and stores and mills like the supplies and securities in brokers' offices, have been reduced almost to a bare nothing. Prices have fallen in most directions except in the case of some agricultural commodities, where advances have not amounted to anything but domestic scarcity. The liquidation of labor is an unrealizable myth, but there has been a large liquidation of employment which will not fail to make labor more efficient for years to come than it has been for years past. Hard times have been teaching lessons of thrift, and as a result efficiency in the use of capital is similarly assured.

Replenishment is bound to be the order of the day in most lines of business. As an example of what must take place it is certain that the railroads will have to place contracts for getting business. The necessity of getting business will compel successful efforts to that end, and sooner rather than later it will be perceived that the present is an excellent time to make contracts for construction and development of every kind. The level of general prices and the state of labor, together with the increasing ease of the money market, are prime factors in an equation the solution of which is usually a forward business movement.

Especially does the situation in money deserve to be optimistically emphasized. Without recounting the processes which have conducted to an unprecedented amplitude of lending power by the banks, it suffices to say that there is no lack of credit capacity on the part of lenders to deter business ventures. There is only lacking courage to borrow and a more confident willingness to lend, and these cannot long endure in face of the inveterate habit of idle money to seek occupation.

Our foreign trade promises to attain colossal proportions. The momenta which business endeavor has acquired in this field is sure to communicate impulses to domestic trade and industry, and what is more, the sustained growth of foreign trade will be fostered by the provision of funds to foreign countries which will put and keep their industrial machinery in operation.

We have begun to lend money abroad not only to belligerents but to neutrals. We do more of this as the savings of enforced economy fill up the banks and as our bankers learn better how to handle our new financial facilities. The establishment of the Federal Reserve banking system and the leadership taken by New York State in remodeling and modernizing its banking law have inaugurated conditions which will permit American finance to render the country's huge wealth more available for use in the capital market than it has ever been.

So far as the unknown quantities of agriculture go it is far safer to count on a good crop year than the contrary. The American farmer has shown what he can do in enlarging his production, and never has so much attention been directed as now to the increase of the output of the farms.

Drawbacks are felt on account of domestic political experiments with the organization and conduct of business, but the war has overclouded them for the time being. In addition the political temper has changed. Public opinion, as the November elections showed and as the abrupt reversal of policy by the Interstate Commerce Commission has further demonstrated, no longer indorses anything but a really constructive political programme. It will not be lulled by a destructive programme which is merely labelled helpful.

As for the war, it has been eliminated as an element of stupendous surprise in commercial and financial calculations. It has been admitted as an item to the reckoning, and the business and banking position has been adjusted to its accommodation.

It is not a bad sign that there is so general a refusal to forecast the business future. Neither is it ill omen that the expectations of business improvement, when avowed at all, are so moderate. Betterment is the more likely to exceed expectations after the familiar fashion of economic developments when thought has been gravely engaged with the outcomes of any extraordinary situation. Nor are American business men of a breed given to wringing hands in despair over a situation which has to be accepted as a fact.

The Unspeaking Coroners' Office.

Commissioner of Accounts LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN has made a preliminary report to Mayor MITCHELL on the organization and workings of the Coroners' Office, in which he presents in concrete form the conclusions which every intelligent citizen had formed in following the course of his investigation in the newspapers. The Coroners' Office is a hopeless anachronism. It is given over to the unit and the trust; worthy. It could not possibly be useful in any high degree. It can be partial and venal and it is unfrequently so.

The office deals with questions of law and science. It has no matters of public policy to deal with. Its function is to examine facts honestly and fearlessly in the light of abstract principles. How absurd it is that the administration should be made partly spoils of the cheapest kind and turned over haphazard to men only fit to run a primary or organize a ward political club. The report to the Mayor says that of sixty-five men who have been elected Coroner since the consolidation of the Greater New York not one was really qualified for the duties to be performed. Who can question the truth of this statement?

It would be tedious to go over the recital of ignorance, stupidity, indifference and perhaps worse which Mr. WALLSTEIN epitomizes in pages of black type. The urgent thing is reform. Other States, notably Massachusetts, have gone far ahead of New York in providing for the intelligent and incorruptible inquiry into cases of suspicious or doubtful death. A bill is being prepared for submission to the Legislature this year which will embody these principles:

"The responsibility for criminal investigation to be placed completely in the hands of the District Attorneys and the police."

"The scandalous jury system and the Coroner's court to be entirely eliminated."

"The magisterial functions of the Coroner to be entrusted to the Judiciary."

"A competent system of medical examination to be established. In devising such a system no experiment is necessary. The success of the medical examiner system of Massachusetts is beyond question, and offers a plan upon which a new system in this city may be erected with every assurance of success."

"The new system to be manned by skilled and experienced pathologists, the chief of whom should be appointed by the Mayor as the result of a non-partisan competitive examination."

In addition to its other merits, the new system will save the city \$50,000 a year. There should be no doubt or hesitation about the speedy passage of the measure when it reaches the Legislature. No party question is involved and no defensible interest imperilled. It is a change from darkness to light that no conscientious law maker can oppose.

Retirements in the Navy.

The law under which a number of naval officers are retired annually through the medium of the so-called "pinking board" was enacted to overcome stagnation of promotion in the navy, which seriously menaced the welfare of the fleet. That it has occasioned hardships is a fact, and these have given substance and body to the movement for its repeal, which is now proposed in the House.

But how shall the evil this law was designed to cure be remedied if resort is not had to forced retirements? What better plan has been proposed than the one now under criticism? Can any scheme be devised that will satisfy all?

These questions deserve careful study from the men who contemplate the repeal of the retirement law. Their first duty is to the navy, and this is not an auspicious moment for reducing its efficiency.

The Union Pacific railroad men who have been ordered by the road's traffic director not to dream can easily comply with the new regulation by refraining from sleep.

If the death rate of New York continues to drop 35 of a point a year, definitely, how long will it be before a man will have to cross the Hudson to get out of a life of which he has had enough?

As Mr. TAPP knows something about the Philippines and their people from first hand experience it is scarcely to be expected that a Congress charged with a service to humanity will pay much attention to his opinions concerning their welfare.

When the New Haven railroad applies to the Legislature of three New England States for authority to issue a mortgage for \$200,000,000 and resolutely refuses to hire any lobbyist to help the project along, one of the most ancient and profitable industries of Yankee land will receive a body blow.

As for the one term plank in the Baltimore platform, the public has come to regard political platforms as nothing more than political platitudes, easily broken.

Despatch from Washington.

A well merited tribute to the conservatism and sincerity of politicians.

Again the police score in the steps which they have made toward the solution of the West Meadows murder mystery. At the sight of the police officers to learn the trade is called a devil. If he but when he enters he will be when no completes the trade.

of the dead man and that the time of his disappearance corresponds with the date of the papers wrapped about the remains. From this point there seem to proceed many possible lines of inquiry. The victim's business of collector should furnish suggestions as to the locality of the murder and might even point nearly to the perpetrators. It is a strange thing how poor a prospect post-mortem examinations are to the assassin. As in the Goldenpope and Amulmer and sundry other cases, it seems probable that the precautions taken may aid detection in the present instance rather than shield the criminals.

A Western dining car company has substituted waitresses for waiters, but the suggestion that rail food be served is rejected as too radical.

DISCREDITS NEAR SIDE STOP.

Highway Protector Thinks That Growing Caution Alone Saves Lives.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: There has been a good deal of talk about the reduction in the number of deaths by trolley cars since the near side stop has been forced in January, 1915, one child and eight adults were killed by being run over by trolley cars in Greater New York, as compared with one child and ten adults in January, 1914, and ten persons killed in February, 1914, and nine adults and eight children were killed, as compared with two children and eight adults in 1914 and thirteen for 1915. In March, 1914, four children and eleven adults lost their lives, as compared with two children and five adults in 1914 and eight persons in 1915. In April, 1914, three children and seven adults were killed by trolley cars, as compared with two children and three adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In May, 1914, two children and three adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In June, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In July, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In August, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In September, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In October, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In November, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915. In December, 1914, one child and four adults, as compared with one child and five adults in 1914 and five adults in 1915.

The statistics as above enumerated show conclusively that the reduction in the mortality rate is not due to the near side stop regulation but to the fact that the general public has been educated by the vigilance of the street railway employees.

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History of a Good Intention.

"THE SECRET PAPERS."

We Give Space to a Dissenting View of Their Significance.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: When Richelieu said that he could bring any man to the block on the evidence of a single word of handwriting, he laid down a doctrine which evidently has actuated Mr. Maurice Low and THE SUN to convict Germany of bad faith toward Belgium. But your plea is rather subtle for home consumption. Disregarding for the sake of argument, your statement that although the German Government has not published the proof which it claims to have had of Belgium's secret plan to cooperate with France and England against Germany, the existence of such proof having been asserted by the Chancellor and the Foreign Secretary, you say that it is possible, nay, highly probable, that it had all the necessary information through secret channels to convince it of the existence of such an understanding.

It may be that this information was not in the form of a regular document, and again it may be that it leaked out through indirect disclosures on the part of Belgium. But the fact that the assertion by the German Chancellor of such an understanding or agreement has been fully and publicly contradicted by the documents found in the War Office at Brussels goes far to confirm the belief that the German Government was well advised what her enemies were about. It is presumably regarded as a matter of expediency to reveal the original source of this information and how it came into possession of the Berlin Government.

You attach great importance to the statement that the secret documents prove that "the plans of the Allies to enter Belgium with the connivance or cooperation of the Belgian Government." If you hold, as you seem, that this conclusion exonerates the Allies, you certainly are more anxious to discover an apology for Germany than Belgium themselves.

Why did not the Belgian Government, since it pretended to be neutral, concert a similar plan with Germany, which was equally entitled with France and England to the confidences of the Belgian Government as a party to Belgium's neutrality? Why did Belgium discuss plans of military cooperation with Germany against Germany, and not with Germany against the other signatories to the guaranty of neutrality?

Because she had more to fear from Germany than from France or England, you say. That contention, however, is not supported by the facts. A better judge than THE SUN's writer is the Belgian Minister to Berlin, Baron Greindl, offered strenuous objections against a so-called military arrangement with the enemies of Germany, and among the secret documents given out by Dr. Dernburg is a confidential report in which the Belgian Minister at Berlin unqualifiedly stigmatises such an arrangement as a betrayal of the true relations of Belgium toward Germany. Besides pointing out the danger of an invasion of Belgium by France and England, he said in his report, dated Berlin, December 23, 1914, addressing his Government:

"From the French side danger threatens not only in the south of Luxembourg, it threatens us on our entire joint frontier."

"We have a positive evidence of it. Evidently the project of an outflanking movement from the north forms part of the scheme of the 'Entente Cordiale.'"

"Their aim was to transport a Belgian division to Antwerp, which means to establish in our country a basis of operation for an offensive in the direction of the lower Rhine and Westphalia, and then to make use of our railways to transport our troops to the front. This is a direct violation of the 'Entente Cordiale,' which was just as perilous as they were to us. It has shown us plainly the true meaning of the 'Entente Cordiale.'"

"This British army at Calais and Dunkirk would by no means march along our frontier to Longwy in order to reach Germany, but would invade Belgium from the northwest. That would give us the advantage of being able to begin operations immediately to encounter the Belgian army in a region where we could depend on our own forces. In case we wanted to risk a battle."

This, it seems to me, completely disposes of your intimation that there was no justification for anticipating an invasion of Belgium by France and England, since it appears that one of Belgium's leading diplomats shares Germany's well grounded misgivings of the intentions of her enemies, and that the intentions of her enemies are now fully proved by the secret documents in the case.

Papers and a Scrap of Paper.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I don't think any clear minded American is influenced in his opinion of the German invasion of Belgium by all this controversy about papers and scraps of paper. No apprehension that I may feel that my neighbor is hostile to me or meditates any annoyance will justify my taking him by the collar and shaking him, or otherwise mistreating his family.

Otherwise any ruffian might justify his attacks by saying that they were made in self defense, and that he was only trying to prevent possible assaults on him.

NEW YORK, December 31.

MR. GOMPERTS' POWER.

A Prediction as to the Passage of the Immigration Bill.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The immigration bill with the literacy clause included will pass Congress and be signed by the President. The American Federation of Labor has so ordered, and neither Congress nor the President has the courage to go contrary to the demands of Samuel Gompers.

The latter must be sacrificed to the possible union labor vote.

DENVER, Col. December 30.

THE PRACTISED HAND.

Gratifying Increase in Efficiency With Advancing Years.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I haven't made the mistake of writing 1914 when I should have written 1915, yet on previous years I have usually made that error.

Doesn't that prove that I am more efficient at 54 than I was at 52? Or am I simply more careful?

CONSTANT READER.

Mr. Wilson's New Theory of Our Industrial Depression.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I have always had the greatest admiration for our President, despite the fact that his idealism had shot to pieces the business in which I am interested. But this morning I read in your issue of January 2, 1915, a paragraph in which you say that the cause of our industrial depression, shakes my faith.

Can it be possible that he really believes this to be our trouble?

WHERE HALF HIS WAGES GO.

The American Producer Pays for a Swarm of Jacks in Office.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Are you not ashamed that New York should lag behind Pennsylvania?

William Penn's open handed Commonwealth, looking out for some new way of relieving a considerable number of its people of the damnable and tear and stress and strain of ordinary workaday life, appointed an efficiency commission to look into its government. The commission has just made a Christmas present to Pennsylvanians in the shape of recommendations (1) that all public jobs be made permanent under civil service regulations and (2) that after twenty-five years service every officeholder shall have a pension for the remainder of his natural existence.

Now that is progress on right lines. By this stroke at least seven or eight thousand worthy Pennsylvanians will be comfortably provided for and never have another bit of bother about the "daily day," "the wolf at the door," the high cost of living, trade depression, unemployment or any of the other demeritum disagreeable incidents that beset the unofficial workman.

In a letter to THE SUN last February I pointed out that official life as it is lived in this country under national, State or city laws is not only a waste of assurance of a performance, with early retirement on a pension equal to the salary, to become as nearly as possible idyllic, and that if only extended so as to include all male adults it would at once solve the whole social problem in the simplest and happiest manner imaginable.

It was on that ground that I ventured to set forth and justify the right of at least every voter to an office and to a pension. While the fact that a couple of million or more have already, in some shape or other, attained the one and hope for the other is a distinctly encouraging sign of the times, I still feel that it will greatly help our noble unofficial citizenry to support their own hard-burdened in the trenches of the struggle for survival if they know that they are the means, each of them, of making life relatively easy, pleasant and agreeable for some other fellow who would otherwise have to work like themselves. As not all of them are aware of the extent of their altruism in this particular I know of no more helpful service THE SUN's reader than to point out that the per capita tax in the average American city, including all taxes, is now close to \$60; that, allowing for the non-producing element of children, women, the lame, the blind and the official, to every actual producer, this means a tax on the last named of about \$100 a year, which in turn is nearly if not quite half the average workman's yearly wage as shown by the census.

Without omitting to continue damping the trusts and the tariff and the war and the railroads and every other subject of obfuscation in the litany of our Government, I still some consolation for a worker to know that if the cost of living in these days does come high he is at least all the time paying half his wages for the support of his own man on a much better scale than his own.